

RAF Feltwell

A neighbor to
the north

By SSgt. Scott Davis
Public affairs

It's a short drive north up the bumpy B1112. Nine miles from RAF Lakenheath sits a quiet part of the Liberty Wing community — RAF Feltwell. The giant golf balls landmark the base which is visited by people from almost every military community in the United Kingdom.

The base can be like a Sleepy Hollow, according to SSgt. Shawn Todd, an instructor at the Mathies Airman Leadership School. "I like it because it's quiet."

The school is one of the various activities at RAF Feltwell.

The main mission is owned by the 5th Space Surveillance Squadron, a geographically separate unit assigned to the 21st Space Wing at Peterson AFB, Colo. The 5th SPSS — owners of the giant golf balls — locates, tracks and identifies deep-space and low-altitude satellites in support of U.S. Space Command's missions of space control and force enhancement.

The information is passed to the 2nd Command and Control Squadron, Falcon AFB, Colo.

The squadron operates and maintains two passive space surveillance systems called the Deep Space Tracking System and Low Altitude Space Surveillance System.

Another unit at Feltwell is Detachment 4, 18th Intelligence Squadron. The detachment provides electronic, technical and specialized analytical support to the Air Force Space Command deep space surveillance mission and critical operations information to national customers. Unit members conduct mission operations and communications security support to Air Force Space Command and U.S. Space Command for exercises, contingencies and real-world events.

Other units include Detachment 511, Air Force Audit Agency, veterinarian clinic, Air Force Television News U.K. Bureau, Army and Air Force Exchange Service regional headquarters and the Department of Defense Dependent Schools regional headquarters. The 48th Fighter Wing has a fire



department, furnishings management and five-person civil engineering section on Feltwell along with the 48th Component Repair Squadron's precision measurement equipment laboratory, 48th Contracting Squadron and 48th Security Police Squadron combat arms training and maintenance.

Although the base has many different missions, most people visit Feltwell for another reason – the AAFES furniture store. Customers come from throughout the United Kingdom and points beyond, according to the store's manager.

"I've met customers from Mountain Home, Idaho, and Eglin AFB, Fla," said Marvin Huggins, Feltwell furniture store manager. "I've only been here since February 1996 and I've met people from most of the bases in Germany."

Even with the travelers going to the furniture store, the base has a residential feel to it.

"I like it here because it's calm and peaceful," said Nancy Groff, a recreation aid at the Feltwell Community Activity Center. "At Lakenheath, everyone is busy running around. Here, you don't hear the jets flying

above you."

The community center where Groff works is occasionally busy, like during lunchtime when the Airman Leadership School students take advantage of the air hockey and ping pong tables in the center's game room. The center also plans activities for the residents of the base's 190 housing units and four dormitories, and students at the Feltwell elementary and middle schools. A youth hour from 5-6 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays gives students an opportunity to work on a project at the center.

Because it's a small base, Feltwell doesn't have all the services that are found on Lakenheath.

"There are a lot of disadvantages," said SSgt. Espedito Minervine, Airman Leadership School faculty advisor. "You have to go to Lakenheath to take care of personal business and it's hard to get to meetings."

Minervine does, however, like having the base shuttle bus, and believes being at Feltwell helps him in the classroom.

"If you're on a roll and the class is really pumped up and excited, you don't want to

have to stop teaching while an F-15 flies by," he said.

What Feltwell does have is open space. The baseball and soccer fields are used by base and youth teams, and members of a model airplane club take advantage of the fields near the furniture store to practice their hobby.

Feltwell is a convenient location for the RAF Feltwell Flying Club, according to SrA. Clarence Turner, club member. "The area is nice and wide open," he said. "It's hard to find an open area off base."

Club members fly their models during daylight hours whenever the weather permits, according to Turner. And they rarely get complaints for noise.

On the cover

A1C Tyree Koerner, 48th Security Police Squadron, stands guard at the RAF Feltwell main gate.

